

REMARKS

Applicant's counsel thanks the Examiner for the careful consideration given the application. Claim 1 has now been amended by adding the limitations of claims 2 and 3 to claim 1. Claims 2 and 3 have accordingly been cancelled.

Independent claim 1 has now been narrowed by adding the limitations of claim 3. The only reference being cited against the limitations of claim 3 is Weigant (U.S. Patent No. 2,139,294). However, contrary to the Examiner's reading of the Weigant patent, Weigant does not show a load transfer plate with a shackle passing through an aperture at each of three connection points. Rather, Weigant shows a ball and socket at each corner of a three-way swivel. The ball and socket swivel connector is more flexible and not nearly as strong as the shackle connection used in the present invention; this shackle is now specifically included as a limitation in claim 1. Moreover, each ball and socket is not intended to carry an entire load, which is the point of the present load transfer plate. In this regard, it can clearly be seen that it would take much less force to pop the ball of the Weigant device out of the socket than it would to actually break a shackle on the device of the present invention as now claimed in amended claim 1.

Moreover, while the Examiner has come up with several pieces of art that, like Weigant, show three point connectors, none of them is a load transfer plate, intended to facilitate the passing of a load from one lifting device to another. All of the art located by the Examiner appears to be connectors that can be used, for instance to carry an awkward load, like a log, that may need two lines attached to it. Therefore, it would be fair to say that these devices, like the Weigant device, could be used with the present invention, for instance to facilitate lifting a load like a log (using the Weigant device) and then transferring that load to another lifting device (e.g. from a crane on a dock, to a crane on a ship) without putting the object down.

For the foregoing reasons, it is clear that claim 1 as now amended clearly defines over all of the prior art references including the Weigant reference.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the claims as now presented are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge the said fees to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, Order No. 36614.

Respectfully submitted,
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